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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

1. On [redacted] 1953 all house and "block leaders" in Goerlitz were required to attend a meeting at which several Vopo officers explained the procedures regarding issuance of a new East German identity document. Only 30 attended; most of the "block leaders" did not show up. The Vopo explained that the new identity document would be smaller, leather-bound, and printed with special photographs and such very special paper that the West would not easily be able to duplicate it. Each person would be required to report to one of several specially designated official photographers for pictures, and each would receive two pictures, one to go into the document, the other to remain on file with the police. They were advised that under no circumstances would any document be replaced, irrespective of the manner in which it was lost. One of the block leaders had asked what would happen in the event someone's identity document should accidentally be stolen or lost in any other way and whether such person would then become a second-class citizen because he would not be able to obtain a new one. The question caused considerable laughter on the part of all attending and obvious embarrassment to the Vopos, who explained: their instructions were that under no circumstances was anyone to receive a second identity card.
2. Nothing was said about limitations of travel as a result of the proposed new documentation. Except for changes above noted, the only additional change is that children now reaching the age of 14 (formerly age 15) will be required to obtain an identity document.
3. No one had as yet obtained a new identity document but applications for them were in process and, as of [redacted] it was estimated that approximately 20 percent of the applications in the Goerlitz area had been completed. Applications are apparently being taken by streets alphabetically.

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